

REMARKS

In this communication, Applicants have amended Claim 7, and canceled Claims 1-6, 14-31 and 33-47 without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter is introduced. Claims 7-13 and 32 are pending. Allowance of all pending claims is respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

Claims 7-13 and 32 are objected to as being dependent from a rejected claim. Applicants have amended Claim 7 as an independent claim incorporating all the limitation of the intervening claims. Claims 8-13 and 32 depend from Claim 7. Allowance of Claims 7-13 and 32 is respectfully requested. In order to expedite the prosecution, Applicants have canceled all other pending claims without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants, however, reserve the right to pursue the canceled claims in a Continuation Application.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4, 6, 20, 27-28 and 31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,744,336 to Hodges et al. for reasons stated on page 3 of the Office Action. Claims 1-4, 6, 20, 27-28 and 31 have been canceled by this amendment. The rejection is now moot.

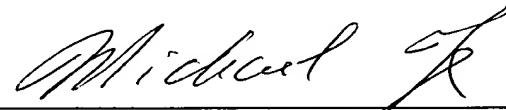
Rejections under 35 USC 103

Claims 21, 22, and 27-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hodges for reasons stated on pages 4-6 of the Office Action. Claims 21, 22 and 27-30 have been canceled by this amendment. The rejection is now moot.

In view of the foregoing remarks, favorable reconsideration of all pending claims is requested. Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance and requests that a notice of allowance be issued. Should the Examiner believe that anything further is required to expedite the prosecution of this application or further clarify the issues, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

PIPER RUDNICK LLP



Steven B. Kelber
Registration No. 30,073
Attorney of Record

1200 Nineteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036-2412
Telephone No. (202) 861-3900
Facsimile No. (202) 223-2085

Michael Ye
Registration No. 47,195